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ABSTRACT

Beliefs regarding classroom management vary among teachers and play an important role in effective instruction. The primary goal of this study was to investigate the differences between the beliefs of experienced teachers and novice teachers regarding classroom management styles. Within this study, classroom management is defined as a multi-faceted process that includes three broad dimensions--person, instruction, and discipline. Data were collected form 238 subjects (55 percent novice teachers and 45 percent experienced teachers) via the Inventory of Classroom Management Styles (ICMS) and demographics. The ICMS, a major revision of Tamashiro's (1980) Beliefs on Discipline Inventory, consists of 41 Likert format statements and considers each of the three dimensions of classroom management. Beliefs were classified on a continuum that reflects the degree of teacher power over students. The continuum is categorized into three segments--non-interventionist, interactionalist, and interventionist. Data were analyzed utilizing a series of one-way ANOVAs. Novice teachers were found to score significantly more interventionists on the full-scale and two of the three sub-scales of the ICMS. (Contains 17 references.) (Author)

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Beliefs Regarding Classroom Management Style: Differences Between Novice and Experienced Teachers

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Paper presented at the Annual Conference of the Southwest Educational Research Association, San Antonio, TX., January, 1994

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ABSTRACT

Beliefs regarding classroom management vary among teachers and play an important role in effective instruction. The primary goal of this study is to investigate the differences between the beliefs of experienced teachers and novice teachers regarding classroom management styles. Within this study, classroom management is defined as a multi-faceted process that includes three broad dimensions--person, instruction, and discipline.

Data were collected from 238 subjects (55% novice teachers and 45% experienced teachers) via the Inventory of Classroom Management Styles (ICMS) and demographics. The ICMS represents a major revision of Tamashiro's (1980) Beliefs on Discipline Inventory, consists of 41 Likert format statements, and considers each of the three dimensions of classroom management. Beliefs were classified on a continuum that reflects the degree of teacher power over students (Wolfgang & Glickman, 1980, 1986). The continuum is categorized into three segments--non-interventionist, interactionalist, and interventionist.

Data were analyzed utilizing a series of one-way ANOVAs. Novice teachers were found to score significantly more interventionist on the full-scale and two of the three sub-scales of the ICMS.

Beliefs Regarding Classroom Management Style: Differences Between Novice and Experienced Teachers

Although often used interchangeably, the terms *classroom management* and *discipline* are not synonymous. The term *discipline* typically refers to the structures and rules describing the expected behavior of students and the efforts to ensure that students comply with those rules. However, the literature generally defines *classroom management* as a broader, umbrella term that describes all teacher efforts to oversee the activities of the classroom including learning, social interaction, and student behavior. Thus, classroom management includes, but is not limited to, discipline concerns (Johns, MacNaughton, & Karabinus, 1989; Lemlech, 1988; Wolfe, 1988; Wolfgang & Glickman, 1980, 1986).

Creating an optimum instructional climate is no easy task. Rust (1992) reports anecdotal evidence from first-year teachers who report high levels of stress and frustration as the result of classroom management concerns. Although discipline was reported as a primary concern, other more general aspects of classroom management were also reported as sources of frustration. These teachers also reported a sense of shock and disillusionment with the new-found realities of the classroom. Similarly, Niemeyer and Moon's (1992) longitudinal study discerned that beginning teachers were concerned about classroom management and control.

Perhaps more distressing is Kagan's (1992) synthesis of the literature which reveals that the majority of studies indicate subjects perceive a "lack of connection" between the information provided in teacher preparation course work and the real classroom" (p. 156). Until recently teacher preparation programs focused on lesson preparation and did not consider classroom management to be a fundamental concern. While no one would negate the importance of instructional planning, perhaps educators should now begin to recognize both effective instruction and

effective classroom management as two vital and intertwined components of the instructional process (Johns, MacNaughton, & Karabinus, 1989).

Within this study, classroom management is defined as a multi-faceted construct that includes three broad dimensions--person, instruction, and discipline. (See Appendix A.) The person dimension includes what teachers believe about students as persons and what they do to enable pupils to develop as individuals. This includes teacher's perceptions of the general nature of students' abilities as well as the overall psychosocial climate. Dimension two, the instruction dimension, incorporates what teachers do to enable students to learn such as the establishment and maintenance of classroom routines, physical room arrangement, and the use of time. Finally, the discipline component, entails those behaviors that teachers use to set standards for behavior and to enforce those standards.

Wolfgang and Glickman (1980, 1986) conceptualized a framework to explain teacher beliefs toward discipline. Based on a combination of psychological interpretations, their continuum illustrates three approaches to classroom interaction--non-interventionists, interventionists, and interactionalists. The non-interventionist presupposes the child has an inner drive that needs to find its expression in the real world. Proponents of transactional analysis or Gordon's *Teacher Effectiveness Training* (1974) are considered non-interventionists. At the opposite end of the continuum are interventionists--those who emphasize what the outer environment (of people and objects) does to the human organism to cause it to develop in its particular way. Traditional behavior modification provides the theoretical foundation for this school of thought. Midway between these two extremes, interactionalists focus on what the individual does to modify the external environment as well as what the environment does to shape him or her. Alfred Adler, Rudolf Dreikurs, and William Glasser are considered to be interactionalists.

The assumption is that teachers believe and act according to all three models of discipline, but one usually predominates in beliefs and actions (Wolfgang & Glickman, 1980; 1986). Therefore, the application of these various theories emphasizes teacher behaviors that reflect the corresponding degrees of power possessed by student and teacher.

Appendix B represents a modification of Wolfgang and Glickman's (1980) Teacher Behavior Continuum (TBC) that reflects the power relationship between teacher and student and includes eight typical techniques utilized by teachers in dealing with misbehavior. At one end of the continuum, the child (C) enjoys the most control over his or her behavior while the teacher (t) has least control. At the opposite end of the continuum, the teacher (T) assumes control of the child (c). Therefore, those who act from the non-interventionist's perspective are likely to utilize minimal power while interventionists would exercise greater control. Mid-way between these two, interactionalists strive to find joint solutions while employing some of the same techniques as non-interventionists and interventionists. Still, the interactionalist is ". . . wary of any unilateral control of behavior by either student or teacher" (Wolfgang & Glickman, 1980, p. 18).

Research suggests that less experienced teachers differ from those with more experience regarding their attitudes pertaining to discipline. Swanson, O'Connor, and Cooney (1990) report that novice teachers tend to respond in ways that are less directive and obtrusive than their experienced counterparts. "New" teachers appeared to be patient, share responsibility, and interact with students. More experienced teachers, however, tended to react in a manner that could be classified as more interventionist in nature--insisting on appropriate behavior, using time-out procedures, punishing students, etc. (Swanson, O'Connor, & Cooney, 1990).

On the other hand, Kagan's more recent (1992) synthesis of the learning-to-teach literature reveals a large and fairly consistent body of research that paints a

different picture of pre-service and beginning teachers describing them as growing more controlling in their beliefs. McNeely and Mertz's study (cited in Kagan, 1992) revealed that student teachers began their experience by focusing on quality lesson planning. By the end of their experience, however, they had begun to consider pupils as the "enemy," were overly concerned with class control, and shifted the focus of lesson planning from activities designed to encourage learning to those likely to discourage disruption (Kagan, 1992). Kagan, therefore states that ". . . class control and instruction appear to be inextricably interrelated pedagogical tasks" (1992, p. 145). Kagan also concluded that teachers are capable of focusing on their pupils and their learning only after they have negotiated a preliminary stage in which they develop an image of themselves as teachers.

Although a large body of research exists on the subject of discipline, little has been done regarding the broader concept of classroom management. The primary goal of this study is to investigate the differences between the beliefs of experienced teachers and novice teachers regarding classroom management styles. It was, therefore, hypothesized that novice teachers would score significantly more interventionist than their experienced counterparts on the Inventory of Classroom Management Style's full-scale as well as on each of the three sub-scales. Similar to other research, a novice teacher is defined as one with zero to three years teaching experience (Berliner, 1988; Kagan, 1992; Korevaar & Bergen, 1992).

Methodology

Participants

College students enrolled at a mid-sized, regional university in the south were drawn from sections of education courses. There were 238 participants; 55% were novice teachers and 45%, experienced teachers. The subject pool was composed primarily of females (87.4%; 12.6% males) and those who taught sixth grade or below. Subjects ranged in age from 19 to 61, with an average age of 31.7 years.

Those subjects who are currently teaching work in area schools which could be described as rural in nature where ethnic composition is approximately 60% white, 40% black. Their students' parents could be described as primarily blue collar workers and low SES. Pre-service teachers participating in the study are primarily the products of and are trained in these same area schools.

Instruments

Data were collected via the Inventory of Classroom Management Style (ICMS) and demographics. The ICMS represents a major revision of Tamashiro's Beliefs on Discipline Inventory (BDI) (Wolfgang & Glickman,1980, 1986). Recent findings have revealed classroom management style as measured by the ICMS to have meaningful, testable relationships to other variables (Martin & Baldwin, 1993a; Martin & Baldwin, 1993b). Cronbach alpha reliability on the ICMS full scale = .64.

In addition to the discipline sub-scale, the ICMS also includes sub-scales to address the instruction and person dimensions of classroom management. The ICMS classifies each of these three dimensions of classroom management on a continuum categorized into three segments--non-interventionist, interactionalist, and interventionist (Wolfgang & Glickman, 1980, 1986) and consists of 41 Likert items. A four category response scale for each item was utilized with categories defined as *Describes Me Very Well*, *Describes Me Usually*, *Describes Me Somewhat*, and *Describes Me Not At All*. Possible scores on the ICMS range from 41 (most non-interventionist) to 164 (most interventionist); scores approaching the mid-point of 102.5 are indicative of interactionalist ideology.

Results & Discussion

To determine if the ICMS reflects differences between novice and experienced teachers, a series of one-way ANOVAs was performed. Scores on the ICMS full-scale and each of the three sub-scales served as the dependent variables. Level of experience served as the independent variable where novice teachers were those

with zero to three years experience; experienced teachers were those with more than three years experience.

Results indicate that novice teachers scored significantly more interventionist in their perceptions of classroom management style than experienced teachers ($F_{1, 217} = 4.34$; $p < .05$). In addition, novice teachers and experienced teachers differed significantly in both Instruction ($F_{1, 220} = 7.23$; $p < .05$) and Discipline dimensions ($F_{1, 222} = 3.89$; $p < .05$). No significant difference was determined regarding the Person dimension ($F_{1, 224} = .3966$; $p > .05$).

These results imply that novice teachers' perceptions of classroom management may be influenced by their own experiences as students more than their pre-service training programs. Those seasoned classroom teachers may have modified their beliefs and practices to correspond to particular teaching realities and which capitalize on classroom-based problem solving skills learned on the job.

ICMS Sub-scale A (Person) was the only dimension that did not yield significant differences between novice and experienced teachers. This finding suggests that regardless of experience, all subjects have chosen a helping profession and, therefore, may have similar views regarding the nature of students as persons.

Summary & Conclusions

In the minds of teachers, classroom management is considered one of the most enduring and widespread problems in education (Johns, MacNaughton, & Karabinus, 1989; Long & Frye, 1989; Willower, Eidell, & Hoy, 1967). Beliefs regarding the nature of appropriate and inappropriate student behaviors and how to manage classrooms vary among teachers and can play an important role in the determination of teacher behavior (Willower, Eidell, & Hoy, 1967; Wolfgang & Glickman, 1980, 1986).

Beliefs regarding the nature of appropriate and inappropriate behaviors and how to control them vary among teachers and can play an important role in the determination of teacher behavior (Willower, Eidell, & Hoy, 1967; Wolfgang &

Glickman, 1980, 1986). Wolfgang and Glickman's (1980, 1986) continuum of beliefs regarding discipline ranges from non-interventionist to interventionist with interactionalists mid-way between the two extreme points.

Research has revealed significant differences between certain groups pertaining to beliefs regarding discipline, but little has been done considering the broader concept of classroom management. The purpose of this study was to investigate the differences between the beliefs of experienced and novice teachers regarding classroom management.

Data were collected utilizing the Inventory of Classroom Management Styles (ICMS) and demographics. Findings indicate that novice teachers scored significantly more interventionist than experienced teachers on the full-scale score and two of the three sub-scales. While both the instruction and discipline sub-scales yielded significance, the person sub-scale did not. This could be explained by the fact that, regardless of experience, all subjects have chosen a helping profession and therefore, may have similar views regarding the nature of students as persons.

There can be little doubt that the novice teacher encounters a variety of new experiences in the classroom. Their beliefs regarding these experiences and the manner in which they approach them work together to create a unique and individual style of classroom management. Efficient lesson planning and effective classroom management are both necessary in order for learning to take place. This, then, seems an area fruitful for future research.

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APPENDIX A

FRAMEWORK FOR *INVENTORY OF CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT STYLE*
DIMENSIONS OF TEACHER CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT BEHAVIOR

I. PERSON DIMENSION -- what teachers believe about students as persons and what teachers do to enable students to develop as persons

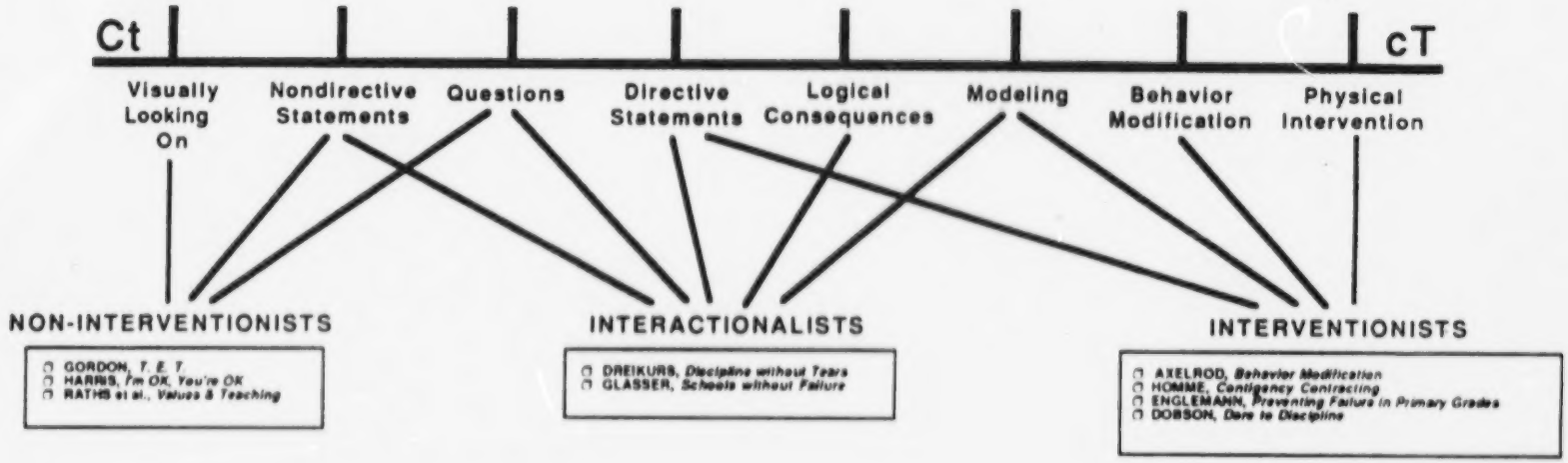
- A. TEACHER'S PERCEPTIONS OF THE NATURE OF STUDENTS
  1. personal attributes
  2. independence/capabilities of students
- B. PSYCHOSOCIAL CLIMATE
  1. personal attention/worth
  2. opportunity for success
  3. group spirit and purpose
  4. classroom climate (warmth, friendliness, courtesy, respect)

II. INSTRUCTION DIMENSION -- what teachers do to enable students to learn

- A. PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT
  1. territory
  2. seating
  3. materials
- B. TIME
  1. how to allocate time
  2. diversions from task
- C. CLASSROOM ROUTINES
  1. daily routines
  2. transitions
- D. MONITORING LEARNING BEHAVIOR
  1. keeping on-task
  2. circulating
  3. feedback on performance
  4. choice of learning topic/task
  5. purpose of homework

III. DISCIPLINE DIMENSION -- what teachers do to set standards for behavior and to enforce those standards

- A. RULE SETTING
  1. who sets rules
  2. importance of rules
- B. ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF APPROPRIATE/INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR
  1. importance of praise
  2. effectiveness of punishment/negative consequences



APPENDIX B. Teacher Behavior Continuum (TBC)

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